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C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 000474

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [EFIN](#) [PREL](#) [KU](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: COORDINATING WITH THE UK ON IRAQI DEBT REDUCTION

REF: STATE 026336

Classified By: CDA FRANK URBANCIC; REASON 1.4 (B,D)

[1](#)1. (C) UK Deputy Head of Mission in Kuwait Jamie Bowden reported to EconChief on February 8 that the UK Embassy here did not intend to demarche GOK on a reduction in Iraqi debt as described Reftel. According to Bowden, debt reduction for Iraq had been discussed January 27 at a meeting in Kuwait between U.K. Special Representative for Iraq Sir Jeremy Greenstock and HH Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Sir Jeremy had met with the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs HE Dr. Sheikh Mohammed Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah at the Kuwaitis' request to discuss Iraq in general. The debt issue had come up in the course of that conversation at the Prime Minister's office.

[1](#)2. (C) Bowden said that the UK mission in Kuwait had confirmed with the Foreign Office that it would be "counter-productive" to revisit the debt issue at the lower, bi-lateral level and so soon after the Greenstock meeting.

[1](#)3. (C) According to Bowden, the Prime Minister made these points in his January 27 meeting with Special Representative Greenstock:

- Kuwait would work with others to seek a significant reduction in Iraq's debt
- Kuwait is prepared to start that process
- Only a sovereign Iraq government would qualify as Kuwait's interlocutor
- The negotiations should be in the context of a Paris Club approach
- Any arrangement to reduce Iraq's debt would require National Assembly approval

[1](#)4. (C) Bowden said he saw nothing new in the Prime Minister's approach to Iraq debt reduction and remarked that the points tracked with earlier comments to the press by various GOK spokesmen.
URBANCIC